DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 320 332 EC 231 140

AUTHOR Case, Elizabeth J.
TITLE Transition to the World of Work. Evaluation Report.
INSTITUTION Albuquerque Public Schools, N. Mex.
PUB DATE Nov 89
NOTE 26p.; Print in charts is small. Best available copy.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Daily Living Skills; *Disabilities; *Education Work Relationship; Job Skills; Leisure Education; Parent Attitudes; Program Effectiveness; *Program Evaluation; Secondary Education; Skill Development; Teacher Attitudes; *Transitional Programs; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Albuquerque Public Schools NM

ABSTRACT

The Transition to the World of Work program of the Albuquerque (New Mexico) Public Schools emphasizes developing functional skills and the ability to apply these skills outside the school. The ultimate goals of the program are to help students obtain meaningful, paid employment and function successfully in the community. The program provided systematic vocational, domestic, leisure/recreation, and functional training to 233 students at four secondary side-by-side schools during the 1988-89 school year. The program evaluation found that the majority of parents and service providers perceived that the community-based activities met student needs and had positive impact on students, and that the majority of high-school parents saw a need for parent training in the area of transition to work. Includes six references. (JDD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED320332

EVALUATION REPORT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

Transition To The World Of Work

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Elizabeth Jo Case

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EC 231140

725 University, S.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106

B O A R D O F E D U C A T I O N

DIEGO GALLEGOS
President

PAULINE MARTINEZ
Vice President

PATRICIA BRANDA
Secretary

LEONARD DE LAYO, JR
Member

DOUGLAS MCVICKER
Member

MARY LEE MARTIN
Member

WILLIAM ROTHANBARGAR
Member

DR. JACK BOBROFF
Superintendent

JOAN HEINSOHN
Deputy Superintendent, Instructional Services

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Ronald A. Williams, Director

Prepared by:

ELIZABETH J. CASE, Ph.D.
EHA-B Program Evaluation Specialist

November, 1989

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TRANSITION TO THE WORLD OF WORK

ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY..... i
Methodology..... i
Findings..... i

TRANSITION TO THE WORLD OF WORK 1
Background Information 1
Program Description..... 2

EVALUATION DESIGN..... 4
Development Of The Study..... 4
Review Of Records..... 4
Survey Research..... 5
Interviews..... 5

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS..... 6
Profile Of The Population Served..... 6
Agreement Between Parents And Service Providers On Appropriateness Of Activities 7
Extent Objectives Are Implemented In Programs..... 9
Extent Activities For Specific Objectives Affected Students 11
Parents' Perceptions And Parent Training..... 13
Specific Benefits Of The Program..... 15
Suggestions To Make The Program Stronger/More Effective 16

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS..... 18
Major Findings..... 18

REFERENCES..... 20

ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

Program Description

Youth with moderate to severe disabilities face an uncertain future when they leave the public schools (Will, 1987). The Albuquerque Public Schools has responded to this need by providing a program for improving the transition from school to working life for severely disabled youth. The program has been titled, "Transition To The World Of Work (Transition To Work)."

Transition To Work is a new field in special education. The emphasis of the program is on developing functional skills (such as work-related skills, recreational/leisure skills, and vocational skills) and the ability to apply these skills outside the school. The ultimate goals of the program are to help students obtain meaningful, paid employment and function successfully in the community.

Students at four secondary side-by-side schools participated in Transition To Work activities during the 1988-89 school year. The school sites evaluated included: Madison Middle School, Taft Middle School, Manzano High School, and Valley High School. The program provided systematic vocational, domestic, leisure/recreation, and functional training in the community.

Methodology

The study was designed to evaluate the program in terms of: (1) the extent to which the program implemented its objectives and activities; (2) the impact of the program on students; (3) the benefits of the program; and (4) the development of suggestions regarding what could be done to make the program more effective.

Data for the study were collected by these methods: review of records, survey research, and interviews.

Findings

(1) Of the students enrolled at the four side-by-side sites, 233 participated in the Transition To Work Program during the 1988-89 school year. This number represents 67.34% of the enrolled students.

(2) Ninety-three point eight percent (93.8%) of the parents, 94.6% of the high school service providers[1], and 86.8% of the middle school service providers perceived that the community-based activities provided by the Transition To Work Program met the needs of the students.

---

(1) Service providers consisted of teachers, educational assistants, and therapists.

(3) Parents and service providers of middle school students perceived that all Transition To Work activities had positive impact on students--especially community-based activities such as learning how to eat in restaurants and visiting job sites.

(4) High school service providers and parents clearly thought that the activities of the program had a positive effect on students. Service providers tended to see a more positive effect on students than did parents at the high school level.

(5) Sixty-three point four percent (63.4%) of the high school parents and 43.6% of the middle school parents say a need for parent training in the area of Transition To Work. By comparison, 59.5% of high school service providers and 50.9% of middle school service providers say a need for parent training.

(6) Parents and service providers suggested several parent training topics to help students and their families with transitioning to adult life. The topics included:
   (a) What effect do wages have on Social Security benefits?
   (b) What service agencies and employment agencies are available to students with disabilities after they leave high school?
   (c) What are the roles of different agencies in the school to work transition process?

(7) Respondents were asked to identify specific benefits of the Transition To Work Program for students. Benefits identified included:
   (a) Students developed independence and self-respect.
   (b) Students developed skills such as personal grooming skills, work-related skills, transportation skills, and leisure skills.
   (c) Students benefitted due to the patience and dedication of the staff.

EVALUATION REPORT

TRANSITION TO THE WORLD OF WORK

Background Information

Although great strides have been made in the education of children and youth with disabilities since the Education For All Handicapped Children Act-Part B (EHA-B) was introduced, the Act does not insure that disabled citizens have vocational opportunities after high school. The following statistics are indicative of the severity of the problem:

(1) The Department of Labor estimated that the current unemployment rate among handicapped individuals is 59%.

(2) The 1985 Harris Poll findings revealed that 40% of all disabled students ages 16 and over do not finish high school compared to 15% of non-disabled persons who do not finish high school.

(3) The Harris Poll (1985) indicated that 50% of all persons with disabilities, ages 16 and above, report a household income of $7,500 a year or less.

Two federal agencies, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the U.S. Department of Education and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities in the Department of Health and Human Services have made the "transition from student to adult status" a national priority.

Legislation such as the EHA-B, the Secondary Education and Transition Services provision of Public Law 98-199, and the Education Act Amendments for Handicapped Children have further focused attention on the concept of transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities.

Transition to work is a new field in special education. It includes programmatic changes which emphasize teaching students in the community. As Williams, Vogelsburg, and Schutz (1985) stated:

> The last few years of a handicapped student's schooling must be future oriented. There must be emphasis on the development of functional skills and the ability to apply these skills in environments outside the school--at home, in public and commercial locations, in vocational settings, and even in leisure activities. (As quoted in Haring & McCormick, 1986, p.481.)

The national goals of Transition are enhancing student opportunities for (1) obtaining meaningful, paid employment, and (2) functioning successfully in the community. To address these goals meaningfully, restructuring and rethinking of all professional roles and responsibilities are required.

An example of restructuring and rethinking roles includes training teachers to participate in on site vocational assessment of students and job placement of students--a role formerly assumed by the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation after students left school. This restructuring and rethinking roles takes teachers out of the classroom and into community settings where teachers assess students' abilities in actual job settings and assist in helping students obtain employment before students leave high school.

Program Description

In 1985, the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) initiated the Transition to Work Program for students with moderate and severe disabilities. Funds from the EHA-B were used "to enhance student opportunities for successfully completing the transition from school to the world of work" (APS EHA-B Plan, 1988).

Students at four schools with side-by-side programs participated in Transition To Work activities during the 1988-89 school year. The schools included: Madison Middle School, Taft Middle School, Manzano High School, and Valley High School.[2] Special education students attending these side-by-side programs are deemed to be have special needs which do not allow them to function in regular schools. Students require intensive programming and additional services such as speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and adapted physical education.

The Transition To Work Program was designed to meet the special needs of side-by-side students who had difficulty transferring what was learned in the classroom to the community or home. Students, through community-based instruction activities, were provided the opportunity to apply functional skills in environments other than the classroom. More specifically, The Transition To Work Program provided systematic vocational, domestic, leisure/recreation, and functional training in the community.

---

(2) Grant and McKinley Middle School students were included in some, but not all, aspects of the program. Hence, they were not included in the study.

According to the Addendum to the Side-by-Side Curriculum Guide, skills developed in the categories of objectives depend on the age and skill level of the students. Examples of skills are described briefly by category.

Vocational Training included learning work-related behaviors such as attending to task, following directions, grooming, and being on time. It also included exploring the community for places of employment and having the opportunity for different job experiences.

Domestic Training included learning to cook, clean, or do other domestic chores depending on the age and skill level of the student.

Leisure/Recreation Training included learning how to socialize when bowling, dancing, swimming, and engaging in other recreational activities.

Functional Training included learning how to use city transportation, take care of one's own belongings, learn money-handling skills, and ask for assistance if needed.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Development Of The Study

In November of 1988, Central Office Special Education Department administrators met to prioritize the EHA-B Components not yet studied. The Transition To Work Component was considered to be a priority for evaluation during the 1988-89 school year.

The EHA-B Evaluator was assigned to study the impact and effectiveness of the component. Beginning in December of 1988, the evaluator interviewed special education administrators, teachers, educational assistants, and parents to ascertain their perceptions of the program and questions they wanted to have answered.

Research questions to be addressed and methods for data collection were determined. Questions to be addressed were:

(1) How many secondary side-by-side students were served by the Transition To Work Component and what were their characteristics?

(2) To what degree do service providers and parents agree on the appropriateness of the program's prescribed goals and objectives?

(3) To what degree are the prescribed goals and objectives being successfully implemented?

(4) What effect do the prescribed goals and objectives have on students?

(5) What specific benefits to students were identified?

(6) What can be done to make the program stronger/more effective?

Data collection was accomplished through review of records, survey research, and interviews. Each of these methods is briefly described.

Review Of Records.

Records in the special education files were reviewed to determine how the program evolved and was implemented. Records reviewed included the District Side-by-Side Curriculum Guide, Transition To Work Handbook, and administrative records at the school sites.

Survey Research.

Two hundred ninety-one (291) parents of side-by-side students and one hundred forty-eight (148) special education teachers, therapists, and educational assistants were surveyed to ascertain the impact and effectiveness of the program. Comments were solicited on the benefits of the program and how the program could be strengthened.

Eighty (80) or 27.49% of the parent surveys were returned. Eighty-seven (87) or 58.78% of the APS service provider surveys were returned. More specifically, 53 of 79 or 67% middle school service providers returned instruments. Thirty-seven (37) of 69 or 53.6% of the high school service providers returned instruments.

Interviews.

Group and individual interviews of special education teachers, educational assistants, administrators, assistant principals, and project staff were conducted prior to administering the survey and, in some instances, after the survey. Pre-survey interviews were designed to obtain background information, to find out about the program, and to determine if the interviewees had questions they would like to have answered.

All questions were incorporated into the study. Post-survey interviews were used to clarify issues raised in comments on the survey.

Rather than discuss the results of each data source in isolation, all the information has been integrated according to topics throughout the discussion. The end result is a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness and impact of the program.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Profile Of The Population Served

One of the major goals of the study was to create a profile of the students served. Two hundred thirty-three (233) or 67.34% of the total number of students in the four side-by-side schools participated in Transition To Work activities. Table 1 summarizes the number of students in the various primary exceptionalities at each site.

At the two middle school side-by-side sites, 121 students ages 10-16 participated in Transition To Work activities. Students served had a variety of handicapping conditions (See Table 1).

At the two high school side-by-side sites, 112 students ages 15-21 participated in the transition program. Since side-by-side students can be in high school until 21 years of age, students tended to receive general activities the first three years of high school and intensive transition to work training the last two years of high school. Students served had a variety of handicapping conditions.

Table 1: SUMMARY OF STUDENTS' PRIMARY EXCEPTIONALITY AT EACH SIDE-BY-SIDE SITE PARTICIPATING IN TRANSITION TO THE WORLD OF WORK

Primary Exceptionality	Middle School Madison	Taft	High School Manzano	Valley	Totals
(1) Behaviorally Disordered	3	-	1	-	4
(2) Blind/Visually Impaired	-	-	1	-	1
(3) Communication Disordered	9	11	4	5	29
(4) Deaf	-	-	-	-	0
(5) Deaf/Blind	-	-	-	2	2
(6) Educable Mentally Handicapped	20	24	30	24	98
(7) Hearing Impaired	1	-	-	-	1
(8) Learning Disabled	2	1	-	-	3
(9) Multiply Impaired	4	19	4	16	43
(10) Physically Impaired	9	5	20	3	37
(11) Severely/Profoundly Handicapped	6	12	9	8	35
(12) Trainable Mentally Handicapped	13	26	25	23	87
(13) Health Impaired	3	1	1	1	6
Total Side-by-Side students per school	70	99	95	82	346
Total participants in Transition per school.	50	71	56	56	233

Agreement Between Parents And Service Providers On Appropriateness Of Activities.

All groups were asked how appropriate community-based learning experiences were for special education students in side-by-side sites. Ninety-three point eight percent (93.8%) of the parents responding agreed or strongly agreed that community-based activities were appropriate for their children. Of the 41 parents of middle school students, 80.5% strongly agreed with providing community-based activities. Of the 39 high school parents responding, 71.8% strongly agreed with the importance of providing community-based learning experiences for their children. Parents not supporting community-based learning experiences wanted academic emphasis instead of vocational training.

Ninety-four point six percent (94.6%) of the high school service providers and 86.8% of the middle school service providers perceived community-based learning experiences as being appropriate for this population. Hence, there was strong agreement between parents and service providers that community-based instruction is appropriate at high school and middle school levels.

Parents and service providers were asked their perception on the appropriateness of specific categories of objectives in the Transition To Work Curriculum. Table 2 summarizes the perceptions of both groups for middle school. The majority of parents perceived all objectives to be appropriate or very appropriate. Parents saw socialization, community-based learning experiences, transportation, and therapeutic swimming as being very appropriate. Fourteen point six percent (14.6%) of the parents responding did not see vocational objectives (e.g., career awareness) as being appropriate.

Some of the parents indicated that their children would lose their social security benefits if they became employed. Hence, these parents did not want their children to work. Other parents thought that their children would have to work in sheltered employment situations rather than supported employment or competitive employment. In post-survey interviews, program planners expressed that there is a need to educate parents about different types of employment opportunities.

Table 2: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS — MIDDLE SCHOOL

Categories Of Objectives	Parents: Very Appro.	Appro.	Not Appro.	Don't Know	Service Providers: Very Appro.	Appro.	Not Appro.	Don't Know
Vocational Objectives	41.5%	39.0%	14.6%	4.8%	39.6%	26.4%	13.2%	20.8%*
Work-related Behaviors	41.5	34.1	9.8	14.6*	50.9	13.2	13.2	11.3*
Home Community Living	58.5	29.3	2.4	7.3*	56.6	20.8	17.0	1.9*
Socialization	65.9	31.7	0	2.4	47.2	37.7	7.6	7.5
Money Handling	48.8	39.0	4.9	7.3	43.4	30.2	20.7	5.7
Community-based Instruction (CBI)	65.9	29.3	2.4	2.4	52.8	28.3	7.5	13.2
Therapeutic Swimming	61.0	29.3	4.9	2.4*	22.6	30.2	11.3	35.8
Transportation	82.9	9.8	4.9	2.4	47.2	24.5	11.3	13.2*

* Rows totaling less than 100% are due to respondents' omitting the item.

There were some discrepancies in how middle school service providers perceived the appropriateness of the objectives, compared to the perception of parents. Except for vocational objectives, more service providers than parents perceived objectives to be inappropriate for their students. The objectives that more than 10% of the service providers perceived as inappropriate included: vocational objectives, work-related behaviors, home community living, money-handling, therapeutic swimming, and transportation. Service providers perceived socialization, community-based experiences, home community living, money-handling, work-related behaviors, and transportation to be most appropriate. Educational assistants and therapists tended to see objectives as being inappropriate more than did teachers.

Differing perceptions by role groups is not unique to this program. It has also been seen in the evaluation of the Early Childhood Program. The perceptions of the respondents can be attributed to, at least in part, the training and philosophy of professionals. Therapists are trained in the medical-model where there is a developmental sequence of skill development. Special education teachers in transition programs have been trained in competency-based curriculum where specific skills must be acquired regardless of the developmental sequence. Hence, we have a philosophical difference that could be bridged through inservice.

Inservice, according to comments on the survey by 34 (or 39%) of the service providers, has been focused on teachers. In post-survey interviews, special education administrators concurred that educational assistants and therapists have not had the depth of training on the restructuring and rethinking of their roles in the transition program. There is a need for clarification of all roles in the new employment-oriented program. Further, inservice may help unify perceptions of persons with differing responsibilities on the importance of specific activities. Additional comments on the survey indicated that therapists also wanted more involvement in the planning process for the program.

Table 3 summarizes the responses of high school parents and high school service providers. Service providers and parents generally viewed all objectives positively. In both groups, however, 15-16% of the respondents stated that vocational objectives were not appropriate for their students. In post-survey interviews, special education administrators expressed concern that 15-16% of the service providers stated that vocational and money-handling objectives were not appropriate for their students. They indicated that further study is needed.

Table 3: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS — HIGH SCHOOL

Categories Of Objectives	Parents: Very Appro.	Appro.	Not Appro.	Don't Know	Service Providers: Very Appro.	Appro.	Not Appro.	Don't Know
Vocational Objectives	15.4%	48.7%	15.4%	17.9%*	43.2%	21.6%	16.2%	18.9%
Work-related Behaviors	43.6	41.0	2.6	12.8	59.5	13.5	8.1	18.9
Home Community Living	48.7	33.3	7.7	10.3	59.5	13.5	8.1	18.9
Socialization	69.2	20.5	0.0	10.3	72.0	24.3	0.0	2.7
Money Handling	48.7	30.8	5.1	15.4	62.2	8.1	16.2	13.5
Community-based Instruction (CBI)	64.1	25.6	2.6	7.7	67.6	27.0	0.0	5.4
Therapeutic Swimming	46.2	43.6	5.1	5.2	2.1	27.0	35.1	35.8
Transportation	64.1	30.8	0.0	5.1	73.0	18.9	8.1	0.0

* Rows totaling less than 100% are due to respondents' omitting the item.

A review of high school survey respondents indicated that parents who did not see vocational objectives as being appropriate were concerned that their children would lose social security benefits. Service providers who saw vocational objectives and money-handling skills as inappropriate were predominately therapists and educational assistants. According to special education administrators, the perceptions of the respondents can be attributed to the fact that, at least in part, inservice has been focused on teachers rather than educational assistants and therapists. Inservice may help unify perceptions of persons with differing responsibilities on the importance of specific activities.

Service providers who thought therapeutic swimming was inappropriate for their students were predominately teachers. Of those responding, 35.1% indicated that vocational training was much more important than swimming. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents indicated that only students who need swimming as therapy should use therapeutic pools. Respondents indicated that students not needing swimming as therapy would be better served by swimming in community pools.

Extent Objectives Are Implemented In Programs

The discrepancy analysis model was used to compare the extent service providers implemented objectives in their program with how they perceived the importance of the objectives. Discrepancy analysis is currently the model recommended for use by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (1986).

Service providers were provided a description of a specific objective. Then, service providers were asked the extent to which they implemented specific objectives in their program. Their responses were then compared with how they rated the importance of specific objectives (see pages 7-9). Since a similar format was used for all seven objectives, only the description and questions for vocational objectives are presented here.

> Vocational objectives, depending on the age and skill level of the student, include: the student will explore the community for places of employment; the student will learn how to apply for a job; and the student will identify requirements of available and appropriate jobs.
>
> 1. How appropriate are these objectives for students with whom you work?
> a. Very appropriate b. Appropriate c. Not appropriate
> d. Not applicable to my position. e. Don't Know
>
> 2. To what extent do you implement these objectives in your program?
> a. A great deal b. Somewhat c. A little
> d. Never e. Not applicable to my position.
>
> 3. To what extent have these objectives affected your students?
> a. A great deal b. somewhat c. A little
> d. Never e. Not applicable to my position.

Parents' ratings were also compared. Again, since a similar format was used for all seven objectives, only the description and questions for vocational objectives are presented here.

> Vocational objectives, depending on the age and skill level of the student, include: the student will explore the community for places of employment; the student will learn how to apply for a job; the student will learn how to apply for a job; the student will identify requirements of available and appropriate jobs.
>
> 1. How appropriate are these objectives for your child?
>   a. Very appropriate b. Appropriate c. Not Appropriate
>   d. Not applicable to my child. e. Don't Know
>
> 2. Is your child involved in activities to meet these objectives?
>   a. Yes b. No c. I'm not sure
>
> 3. To what extent have these objectives affected your child?
>   a. A great deal b. Somewhat c. A little
>   d. Never e. Not applicable to my child.

The responses for middle school providers and parents are presented in Table 4. Results for high school service providers and parents are summarized in Table 5 (page 10). Service providers tended to implement a specific objective in relationship with how they rated the importance of the objective.

When comparing middle school and high school parent perceptions of importance versus actual implementation, the ratings were similar. Significant discrepancies appeared in vocational objectives and money-handling. Parents felt that vocational objectives and money-handling skills should be implemented more than they are.

Table 4: COMPARISON OF MIDDLE SCHOOL RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF IMPORTANCE OF OBJECTIVES VERSUS ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION

	Service Providers' Ratings Of Importance Mean	Parents' Ratings Of Importance Mean	Extent Implemented Mean
Socialization	4.65	4.78	4.65
Transportation	4.65	4.73	4.47
Community-based Experiences	4.54	4.78	4.65
Money Handling	4.19	4.29	3.78
Work-related Behaviors	4.14	4.00	4.00
Vocational Objectives	3.89	4.23	3.62
Therapeutic Swimming	3.73	4.53	4.65

Note: A five point Likert scale was used reflecting a continuum of services/importance. Five was high.

Table 5: COMPARISON OF HIGH SCHOOL RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF IMPORTANCE OF VERSUS ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION

	Service Providers' Ratings Of Importance Mean	Parents' Ratings Of Importance Mean	Extent Implemented Mean
Socialization	4.65	4.41	4.65
Transportation	4.65	4.54	4.47
Community-based Experiences	4.54	4.46	4.65
Money Handling	4.19	4.13	3.78
Work-related Behaviors	4.14	4.15	4.00
Vocational Objectives	3.89	3.63	3.62
Therapeutic Swimming	3.73	4.28	4.65

Note: A five point Likert scale was used reflecting a continuum of services/importance. Five was high.

Parents of middle school and high school students were asked if their children participated in the activities designed to address the objectives. From 12% to 25% of the parents responding indicated they did not know the degree to which their children participated in these activities. This uncertainty has implications for parent conferences. In order for parents to support future-oriented programs for handicapped youth, they must clearly understand the activities of the program (Wehman, 1985).

Extent Activities For Specific Objectives Affected Students

Each parent and service provider was asked to respond to the question, "To what extent have activities for specific objectives affected your students/your child?" Table 6 (page 12) summarizes the findings for middle school respondents.

Overall, the majority of middle school parents and service providers perceived that all activities for specific objectives impacted students "some" or "a great deal." Parents tended to perceive a greater impact on their children in community-based instruction, therapeutic swimming, and transportation. Service providers saw the greatest impact with community-based instruction, work-related behaviors, and in teaching students to use transportation. According to the discrepancy analysis model, the activities designed to meet the objectives were effective.

Table 6: MIDDLE SCHOOL RESPONDENTS:
EXTENT OBJECTIVES AFFECTED STUDENTS

Categories Of Specific Objectives	Parents: Great Deal	Some	None	Don't Know	Service Providers: Great Deal	Some	None	Don't Know
Vocational Objectives	19.3%	58.6%	7.3%	14.6%	28.3%	47.2%	1.9%	22.7%
Work-related Behaviors	22.0	53.6	4.9	19.5	41.5	32.1	1.9	24.6
Home Community Living	29.3	58.6	4.9	7.3	32.1	39.6	0.0	15.1*
Socialization	31.7	61.0	4.9	2.4*	30.2	54.7	0.0	15.1*
Money Handling	17.1	48.8	12.2	2.4*	28.3	50.9	1.9	17.0*
Community-based Instruction (CBI)	51.2	46.4	0.0	0.0*	41.5	43.4	1.9	13.2
Therapeutic Swimming	48.8	36.6	4.9	9.8	15.1	51.0	1.9	32.1
Transportation	41.5	46.3	9.8	2.4	35.8	41.5	5.7	17.0

* Rows totaling less than 100% are due to respondents' omitting the item.

Table 7 summarizes the findings for high school respondents. High school service providers clearly thought the program affected students more strongly than did parents. Service providers, however, tended to see therapeutic swimming and vocational objectives as having less impact than the other objectives.

Table 7: HIGH SCHOOL RESPONDENTS:
EXTENT OBJECTIVES AFFECTED STUDENTS

Categories Of Specific Objectives	Parents: Great Deal	Some	None	Don't Know	Service Providers: Great Deal	Some	None	Don't Know
Vocational Objectives	33.3%	43.4 %	2.6%	20.6%	48.6%	24.3%	8.1%	18.9%
Work-related Behaviors	43.6	46.1	0.0	10.3	62.2	16.2	2.7	18.9
Home Community Living	35.9	51.3	0.0	12.9	67.7	24.3	2.7	5.4
Socialization	46.2	48.7	0.0	5.1	67.6	29.7	2.7	0.0
Money Handling	33.3	51.3	2.6	12.8	62.2	8.1	16.2	13.5
Community-based Instruction (CBI)	55.0	35.9	0.0	5.2	70.3	27.0	0.0	2.7
Therapeutic Swimming	28.2	53.9	5.1	12.8	27.0	62.1	2.7	8.1
Transportation	53.8	41.0	0.0	5.2	64.9	29.7	2.7	2.7

* Rows totaling less than 100% are due to respondents' omitting the item.

Parents' Perceptions And Parent Training

According to special education administrators and documents, the side-by-side special education program shifted from an academic focus to a blend of academic and vocational activities in 1985. The discrepancy analysis model again was used to measure if parents had embraced the current philosophy.

Parents were asked questions regarding their beliefs on their child's educational needs. Table 8 (page 14) summarizes the statements and responses by level. Parents were first asked to respond to the statement: "It is more important for my child to work on academics rather than vocational activities." Results indicated that 29.3% of the middle school parents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, and 63.4% disagreed. In a related question, 68.8% of the parents said that academics and vocational activities were equally as important for their children. Fifty-six point four percent (56.4%) of high school parents and 80.5% of middle school parents said that academics and vocational activities were equally important for their child. Special education service providers are trying to promote the concept that academics and vocational activities are equally as important for side-by-side students. Of the parents responding, 20.5% of high school parents and 29.3% of middle school parents still support an emphasis on academics. More parent training on the goals for the program is warranted.

Parents were also asked "Is there a need for parent training on Transition To Work?" Sixty-three point four percent (63.4%) of the high school parents and 43.6% of the middle school parents saw the need for parent training in the area of Transition To Work.

Parents were then asked if they would attend parent meetings on the Transition To Work Program or related topics. Eighty-two point nine percent (82.9%) of the middle school parents and 71.8% of the high school parents said they would attend such meetings.

Finally, parents were asked to assess their knowledge level of employment services or agencies that can help their child after he/she graduates. Fifteen percent (15%) of middle school parents and 84.6% of the high school parents said they were aware of the agencies listed in the question. Sixteen (16) or 41% of the parents of high school students and 38 or 93% of parents of middle school students requested parent training on agencies available to help them after their child graduates.

Service providers were asked if there was a need for parent training on how parents can help the student when he/she is an adult. Fifty-nine point five percent (59.5%) of high school service providers and 50.9% of middle school service providers said there was a strong need for the training.

Parents and service providers suggested several topics for parent training. These included:

(1) Effect of wages on Social Security benefits.
(2) Continuum of employment options that are or should be available in the community.
(3) Roles of different agencies in the school to work transition process.
(4) Entitlement services versus eligibility services.

Table 8: PARENTAL OPINION ON CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Statement	I Strongly Agree	I Agree	I Don't Know	I Disagree	I Strongly Disagree
Middle School Parents					
It is more important for my child to work on academics rather than vocational activities.	22.0%	7.3%	7.3%	43.9%	19.5%
Academics and vocational activities are equally as important for my child.	35.6	43.9	2.4	17.1	0.0
High School Parents					
It is more important for my child to work on academics rather than vocational activities.	12.8	7.7	15.4	46.2	15.4*
Academics and vocational activities are equally as important for my child.	23.1	33.3	12.8	25.6	5.1
Combined Groups Of Parents					
It is more important for my child to work on academics rather than vocational activities.	17.5	7.5	11.3	45.0	17.5*
Academics and vocational activities are equally as important for my child.	30.0	38.8	7.5	21.3	2.5

* Rows totaling less than 100% are due to respondents' omitting the item.

Specific Benefits Of The Program

In open-ended questions, parents were asked to identify three things they liked most about the program and how the program benefitted their child. Table 9 (page 15) summarizes the responses. Of 41 middle school parents, 36 or 87.8% responded to the item. Of 39 high school parents, 34 or 87.2% responded to the item.

Table 9: BENEFITS OF PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS

Description	Number Of Responses	
	Middle School Parents (N=41)	High School Parents (N=39)
(1) My child has had the opportunity to develop several skills such as personal grooming skills, work-related skills, transportation skills, money-handling skills, and leisure skills.	23	33
(2) Community-based experiences help because they start early to provide a variety of experiences which prepare students for the future and show them what job opportunities exist.	19	18
(3) The students benefit due to the patience and dedication of the staff. (High school parents especially liked job coaches.)	8	18
(4) The program fosters independence in my child and helps him/her gain self-respect.	5	20
(5) The opportunities for socialization help my child.	4	2
(6) Individualizing the program to meet individual student needs makes a difference.	3	5
(7) I didn't know my child was in the program.	3	0

Note: The frequency of a comment does not indicate the validity of the comment. It reflects number only.

High school and middle school parents saw strong benefits of the program in specific skill development and in community-based learning experiences. High school parents stressed that the program fostered independence and self-respect in their children. Both groups saw the dedication and patience of the staff to be beneficial to their children.

Suggestions To Make The Program Stronger/More Effective

Those surveyed were asked for suggestions that would make the Transition To Work Program stronger/more effective. The responses are summarized below. The number in parentheses at the end of each comment indicates the number making similar observations.

(1) We need more parent training and parent involvement. To do this, we need more communication between home and school. We need to help parents learn about Transition To Work, what is realistic for their child, and how to expect students to be more responsible and independent at home. (63 service providers, 25 parents)

(2) Hire more job coaches so students can receive more frequent individualized attention on the job site. Students need the support of the job coaches to succeed in their work experiences. (28 service providers, 27 parents)

(3) We [service providers] need to have more input on how funds should be used. (24 service providers)

(4) High school service providers and middle school parents indicated that middle school needs to emphasize socialization over work skills and community-based activities rather than classroom based activities. (20 service providers, 8 parents)

(5) We need to enlist the support of parents and the business community to expand community-based instruction and increase effectiveness. (19 service providers, 29 parents)

(6) Funds need to be made available earlier in the year. Therapists should be allotted monies separately from teachers, because teachers spend the money before getting the input of therapists. (19 service providers)

(7) Provide more training on community-based instruction. Allow us to visit programs across the country. (17 service providers)

(8) We need more communication and cooperation between agencies, schools, and community. (17 service providers)

(9) Coordinate more between and among levels and start the program in elementary school. (12 service providers)

(10) Provide more community-based instruction and provide it year round. (19 parents)

Several service providers suggested inservice topics. These suggestions included the following:

(1) Suggestions for staff development topics from middle school staff
   (a) Conduct job training inservices for all team members. (7)
   (b) Provide sessions on resources in the community. (7)
   (c) Present an overview of the overall program and how we compare to other programs. (5)
   (d) Provide inservices on how to get wheelchair bound students off campus. (2)
   (e) Conduct inservices on the implications of accepting P.L. 94-142 monies. (2)

(2) Topics recommended by high school service providers
   (a) How do we get more parent involvement? (7)
   (b) How should we schedule taxis and trips and where do we get the money for it? (7)
   (c) How can we include external contracted staff (e.g., speech therapists) in Effective Teaching Training to foster continuity of teaching strategies. (3)
   (d) How do we involve severe/profound students more in Transition To Work? (5)
   (e) How can we have everyone take a UNM class called Community-based Instruction: Implementing Integration and Independence? (5)
   (f) Have workshops on interdisciplinary approach on teaming to help clarify specific staff roles and assist in program implementation. (7)
   (g) How does our program compare with what is happening in the rest of the country? (4)

Parents identified some topics of particular interest to them. These included:

(1) Topics recommended by Middle School Parents
   (a) What resources are available? (17)
   (b) How do you access the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation or other services? (10)
   (c) Where do you go and who do you talk to regarding job services, job placement, and living skills? (10)
   (d) Information! We need to know what is ahead of us, what services are available and what criteria are needed for group homes and sheltered workshops. (12)

(2) Topics recommended by High School Parents
   (a) What agencies are available to help support disabled individuals? (8)
   (b) What can I do or to whom can I turn after graduation? (8)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Transition To Work Component was evaluated during the 1988-89 school year.

The study was designed to address the following questions:

(1) How many secondary side-by-side students were served by the Transition To Work Component and what were their characteristics?

(2) To what degree do service providers and parents agree on the appropriateness of the program's prescribed goals and objectives?

(3) To what degree are the prescribed goals and objectives being successfully implemented?

(4) What effect do the prescribed goals and objectives have on students?

(5) What specific benefits to students were identified?

(6) What can be done to make the program stronger/more effective?

Data collection took three forms: review of records, surveys, and interviews.

Major Findings

The major findings of the study were:

(1) Two hundred thirty-three (233) or 67.34% of the students with special needs at four secondary side-by-side schools participated in Transition To The World Of Work Program.

(2) There was strong agreement by parents (93.8%), high school service providers (94.6%), and middle school service providers (86.8%) that community-based learning experiences meet the needs of the students served.

(3) Perceptions of persons with differing responsibilities in the program differed in the importance of specific activities. This was especially pronounced at the middle school level.

(4) Service providers tended to implement an objective in direct relationship with how they (and parents) viewed the importance of an objective. Exceptions included:
   (a) money-handling skills were implemented less than parents and service providers thought was important; and
   (b) middle school parents thought that vocational objectives and money-handling objectives were more important than the rate at which they were implemented.

(5) All groups surveyed saw the activities of the Transition To Work Program as positively impacting students.

(6) Parents' perceptions on educational needs of their children were tapped. Fifty-six point four percent (56.4%) of the parents responding perceived that academics were equally as important as vocational activities for their children. This reflected that parents have embraced the philosophy of the program especially at the high school level where 80.5% of the parents agreed that academics are as important as vocational activities. However, almost 70% of the middle school parents preferred an emphasis on academics rather than vocational activities.

(7) Parents were asked if there was a need for parent training on Transition To The World Of Work and related topics. In response, 63.4% of high school parents and 43.6% of middle school parents perceived a need for parent training on this and related topics.

(8) Parents and service providers suggested several topics for parent training. These suggestions included:
   (a) Effect of wages on Social Security benefits.
   (b) Continuum of employment options that are or should be available in the community.
   (c) Roles of different agencies in the school to work transition process.
   (d) Entitlement services versus eligibility services.

(9) Parents were asked to identify specific benefits of the program for their children. The benefits identified included:
   (a) Developing skills needed to hold employment.
   (b) Providing opportunities in the community for career exploration.
   (c) Fostering independence and self-respect in students.

(10) Suggestions for improving Transition To Work were solicited in surveys. These included:
   (a) Train all parents and staff on resources available in the community.
   (b) Provide training on what other districts are doing.
   (c) Find a way to increase parent involvement.
   (d) Provide ways to involve the severe/profound population more in Transition To Work.
   (e) Provide more job coaches.
   (f) Provide monies and information earlier in the year.
   (g) More communication is needed between home and school.

REFERENCES

Albuquerque Public Schools. Addendum to the Side-By-Side Curriculum, 1986.

Albuquerque Public Schools. 1988 Application for Local Education Agency. Education of All Handicapped Children Act-Part B, June 1988.

Albuquerque Public Schools. Transition To Work Handbook, 1987.

Rosenstein, J. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, U.S. Department of Education Washington, D.C., Personal Communication, 1988 and 1989.

U.S. Department of Education. Tenth Annual Report to Congress on the Education of the Handicapped Act. Washington, D.C.,: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988.

William, W., Vogelsberg, R.T. Programs for secondary-age severely handicapped youth. In D. Bricker and J. Filler (eds) Serving the severely retarded: From research to practice. Reston, VA: Council on Exceptional Children, 1985 as cited in Haring, N.G. and McCormick, L. Exceptional Children and Youth (4th edition). Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1986.